

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration. Claims 52 and 54-56 were previously pending in this application. Claims 62-63 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 64-69 have been added. Support for the new claims may be found, for example, on page 6, lines 11-13 and page 11, line 28 to page 13, line 9. Claims 52, 54-56, and 64-69 are now pending for examination with claim 52 being an independent claim. No new matter has been added.

Rejection of claims 52 and 54-56 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph

Claims 52 and 54-56 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement.

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. Applicant notes the Examiner's statement that "it is the position of the examiner that the above-noted recitation is described in the instant specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventors, at the time the application was filed had possession of the claimed invention." Applicant assumes that the above-quoted statement includes a typographical error, thus explaining why claims 52 and 54-56 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112.

Applicant reiterates that support for the recitation of "portions of the surface defining the indentations being of material essentially identical to that of portions of the surface defining the protrusions" may be found, for example, in Figures 2, 3, 11, and 12 as well as page 6, lines 3-13 of the instant application. The Office Action cites MPEP 608.02, noting that hatch marks do "not clearly indicate that a material is essentially identical *between two different elements* with similar hatch marks" [emphasis added]. However, Applicant notes that component 12 in FIG. 2, for example, which represent an article according to one embodiment, is not drawn as two different elements. Rather, component 12 is drawn as a single element, as indicated by its continuous border and the consistent hatch marks within the border. Other than the hatch marks, dimension indicators, and labeling arrows, no lines are drawn through component 12 in FIG. 2. Similarly, component 12 is drawn as a continuous, single element in FIGS. 11-12. Thus, it is believed that the above-noted recitation is described in the instant specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one

skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

Moreover, the working examples of the instant application include formation of articles that inherently, from their formation process, would include a plurality of protrusions and a plurality of intervening indentations, with the portions of the surface defining the indentations being of material essentially identical to that of portions of the surface defining the protrusions. For example, the fabrication of a free-standing PDMS mold with an array of microchannels embossed on its surface is described from page 18, line 29 to page 19, line 10 of the instant application. An exemplary embodiment describing the sealing of the PDMS mold to a glass slide is described, for example, on page 19, line 28 to page 20, line 6.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the claim rejections on this ground is respectfully requested.

Rejection of claims 52 and 54-56 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 52 and 54-56 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,443,890 ("Ohman").

Ohman fails to teach or suggest an article comprising a polymeric component having a surface defining a plurality of protrusions and a plurality of intervening indentations, wherein portions of the surface defining the indentations are of material essentially identical to that of portions of the surface defining the protrusions, with the protrusions bonded to a surface of a second component in the absence of auxiliary adhesive thereby defining a liquid-impermeable seal therebetween, as described in claim 52.

The Office Action states that components 1 and 8 in Ohman are being held together by sealing strips 5, and thus, sealing strips 5 are bonding component 1 to component 8. In addition, the Office Action notes that sealing strips 5 provide leakage proof sealing means between components 1 and 8. Applicant does not agree that such an arrangement anticipates claim 52. Claim 52 requires that the protrusions be bonded to the surface of the second component, and that the bond between the protrusions and the surface of the second component define a liquid-impermeable seal. In Ohman, the liquid-impermeable seal is formed by sealing strips 5 (See, e.g., Col. 4, lines 36-42). Sealing strips 5 are not formed of a material essentially identical to that of the portion of the surface

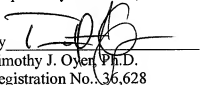
defining the indentations in component 1 of Ohman. Therefore, sealing strips 5 fail to qualify as protrusions as described in claim 52. In addition, the protrusions in Ohman referred to in the Office Action (see, e.g., labeled FIG. 5 in the Office Action of April 29, 2008) do not form a liquid-impermeable seal with component 8. Were these protrusions capable of forming a liquid impermeable seal with component 8, there would be no need to include the sealing strips.

Because each limitation is not taught or suggested in Ohman, claim 52 is patentable over Ohman for at least this reason. Claims 54-56 depend from claim 52 and, thus, are also patentable over Ohman.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the claim rejections on this ground is respectfully requested.

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Respectfully submitted,

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